Research Note 2018-03

Inclusive Leadership Survey Item Development

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14. ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*:

To promote a more ready and capable force, the U.S. Army has called for the fostering and maintenance of positive organizational climates. In particular, to leverage the diversity within the Army, the Army has pushed for the creation of climates for inclusion that are characterized by dignity, respect, and perceptions of value and worth. As facilitators and coordinators of action within the Army, leaders play a prominent role in the development and maintenance of these inclusive climates. The current research effort aimed to identify and develop a comprehensive measure of inclusive leadership within an Army context. The actions that inclusive leaders take were derived from several sources that represent academic literature, Army doctrine, and first-hand accounts from Soldiers. Final synthesis of these actions yielded a survey measure that consisted of 68 items within five dimensions of inclusive leadership.

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INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP SURVEY ITEM DEVELOPMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Requirement:

Integrating values of dignity, respect and inclusion into the culture and climate of the Army at all levels supports and builds the resilience and readiness of our military forces. Leaders play a pivotal role in developing the culture in an organization (e.g., Schein, 2010; Wasserman, Gallegos, & Ferdman, 2008), and facilitate the development of shared perceptions of an organization's climate. Because leaders have such a strong role in defining culture and climate, they are a linchpin in the Army's strategy to develop inclusive climates. However, not much is known about what actions inclusive leaders take to develop positive climates in their units. This research began to address this issue by identifying specific actions that inclusive Army leaders take. In addition, this research provided a foundation to develop a tool to measure inclusive leadership in the Army.

Procedure:

The goal of this research was to identify actions that Army leaders take to act inclusively and develop inclusive climates in their units. Several steps were taken to accomplish this goal. First, inclusive leader actions were identified from sources including the academic literature, Army doctrine, and critical incidents recorded by Soldiers. Leader actions derived from these sources were further refined and reduced to ensure they represented inclusive leadership and not just 'good' leadership. To do this, leader actions were mapped onto a multi-dimension conceptualization of inclusive leadership that included the following five dimensions: treating others fairly; being open to differences; integrating Soldiers into units; leveraging unique perspectives and expertise; and developing a shared understanding through open communication.

Findings:

A total of 68 actions were identified across the five inclusive leadership dimensions.

Utilization and Dissemination of Findings:

Findings from this research provide a foundation to understand what leaders can do to act inclusively and develop inclusive climates within their units. Furthermore, this research was the first step of a multi-phase project to develop a validated measure of inclusive leadership that can be used to assess and provide feedback to leaders on their own leadership. The actions identified in this research will serve as the items for this measure in the next phase of the project.

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP SURVEY ITEM DEVELOPMENT

CONTENTS

Inclusive Leadership Survey Item Development

Introduction

The Army has become an increasingly diverse organization, and understanding how to manage and capitalize on its diversity is a challenge the Army must face (U.S. Department of the Army, 2010). Going beyond surface-level demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, race), the Army defines diversity broadly as "the different attributes, experiences, and backgrounds of our Soldiers, Civilians, and Family Members that further enhance our global capabilities and contribute to an adaptive, culturally astute Army" (U.S. Department of the Army, 2010, p. 1). Research has demonstrated that the diversity of organizational members can benefit many organizational outcomes if leveraged properly. From an information processing perspective (e.g., Homan, van Knippenberg, van Kleef, & De Dreu, 2007; Reagans, Zukerman, & McEvily, 2004; van Knippenberg, & Schippers, 2007; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998), diversity acts as a proxy for knowledge differences allowing diverse groups access to a larger pool of knowledge, skills, and experiences to effectively and innovatively solve complex problems. However, the potential benefits of diversity can only be fully realized when members feel that they are included and their perspectives and knowledge are leveraged in the decision-making processes; thus, fostering and maintaining a climate of inclusion is integral to leverage diverse knowledge bases (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Mitchell et al., 2015; Shore et al., 2011).

Indeed, the Army recognizes the potential benefits of diversity and the necessity for instituting inclusive climates to leverage its diversity and to improve social relations within the organization. According to the Department of Defense's 2012 Diversity and Strategic Plan, the DoD gains "a strategic advantage by leveraging the diversity of all members and creating an inclusive environment in which each member is valued and encouraged to provide ideas critical to innovation, optimization, and organizational mission success" (p. 3). Similarly, the Army Diversity Roadmap (U.S. Department of the Army, 2010) emphasizes the importance of inclusive climates which will (a) allow the Army to leverage its diversity to better accomplish its mission, (b) help mitigate negative social attitudes and problematic interpersonal behaviors that detract from accomplishing the mission, and (c) increase retention of diverse talent which is becoming increasingly more relevant in order to effectively execute complex missions.

This strategy of leveraging diversity by creating inclusive climates relies on several factors in order to be successful. The most important of these factors is Army leaders. Leaders are thought to play a pivotal role in developing and sustaining the climate within the groups they lead (U.S. Department of the Army, 2012). The goal of this work is therefore to identify inclusive leader actions that characterize inclusive leaders in an Army context. In an effort to generate an inventory of inclusive leader actions in Army units this research examines prior literature on leader actions and inclusion (e.g., academic literature, Army doctrine), as well as input from active-duty Soldiers. To help situate the current research, we review the literature on the role of leaders in the Army, organizational climates, and inclusion.

Leadership and Organizational Climate

Leadership is central to hierarchical organizations like the U.S. Army. Army leaders are those who coordinate the action of individuals, both inside and outside the chain of command, toward a desired goal or mission objective (U.S. Department of the Army, 2012). Importantly, while Army leaders are expected to inspire and influence others to accomplish organizational goals, the manner in which a leader obtains results is also vital to Army goals. Specifically, an Army leader's efforts to reach organizational goals should integrate people, values, and task demands in a manner that considers improvements to the organization, Soldier and Civilian well-being, situational changes, and ethical mission accomplishment (U.S. Department of the Army, 2015). Moreover, the Army aims to develop leaders who "effectively interpret, assess, and mold the social interactions within the unit to influence the desired social context, capitalize on opportunities as they evolve, and ultimately, enhance performance" (National Research Council, 2014, p. 57-58).

Consistent with Army doctrine, research has demonstrated that leaders play an important role in shaping group interactions and their subsequent outcomes (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001). Leaders are the drivers and facilitators of action within groups (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003), forming the central core of small groups, companies, and large organizations. Leaders are often conferred power and authority that allows them control over valued resources and outcomes, thus enabling them to influence others in socially meaningful ways (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). Through the establishment of specific goals and priorities, role modeling, and reinforcing desired behaviors via rewards and recognition, leaders communicate the importance of specific initiatives which impact group dynamics and climate (e.g., Barling, Loughlin, & Kelloway, 2002; Hong, Liao, & Jiang, 2013; Zohar & Luria, 2005).

As noted above, the actions of leaders play an influential role in the development and maintenance of group climates that emerge from the shared perceptions of group members (e.g., Ehrhart, Schneider, & Macey, 2014; Schein, 2010; Wasserman et al., 2008). Organizational climate can be defined as "the shared meaning organizational members attach to the events, policies, practices, and procedures they experience and the behaviors they see being rewarded, supported, and expected" (Ehrhart et al., 2014, p. 69).[1] Generally speaking, organizational climates can facilitate many important organizational outcomes. For example, positive climates have been linked to improvements in organizational effectiveness, innovation, well-being, and performance (Ehrhart et al., 2014; James et al., 2008; McKay, Avery, & Morris, 2008; Parker et al., 2003; Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005). Within the Army, positive organizational climates are sought for their potential to increase performance, morale, resilience, and retention rates of personnel, as well as reduce behavioral issues such as sexual assaults and harassments, hazing, and suicide (U.S. Department of Defense, 2012). Through their actions, Army leaders are believed to play a key role in the development of positive climates; specifically, Army leaders facilitate how organizational policies are implemented, model what values are practiced, and determine what behaviors are rewarded and punished.

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[1] In contrast to organizational culture, which is defined by an organization's deep-level values, beliefs, and basic assumptions explaining why things are the way they are (Schein, 2010), an organization's climate speaks to the meaning that organizational members attribute to what policies, practices, and procedures actually occur within the organization (see Ehrhart et al., 2014).

A Climate for Inclusion: Managing and Leveraging Organizational Diversity

Although general (i.e., molar or foundational) organizational climates can capture whether members feel a general positivity toward their organizational environment (e.g., feeling of well-being), climate can also be examined in terms of a specific focus or goal. A focused organizational climate is an aspect of the general climate that describes what is happening within the organization in terms of a specific strategic goal or outcome (Ehrhart et al., 2014). For instance, relevant to the current research, an inclusive climate is an aspect of a larger positive organizational climate that is focused on whether members feel included via internal processes that occur as a part of daily organizational functioning. In the Army, a climate of inclusion can be defined as the shared perceptions that all members of the team are valued and integrated into the team, and their capabilities are recognized and leveraged so that all are enabled to participate and contribute to the mission, to their full potential (Brown, Key-Roberts, & Ratwani, 2018). Prior research has indicated that perceptions of fair treatment, openness to differences, integration of members, leveraging of unique perspectives and expertise, and shared understanding of communication are essential dimensions of an inclusive climate in the Army (Brown et al., 2018, see Table 1). In sum, a climate for inclusion is a facet of a larger organizational environment with the focus of ensuring that individual members feel they are a part of the team through recognition, respect, and utilization of their unique perspectives.

Leaders Actions drive the Formation and Maintenance of Inclusive Climates

As stated earlier, leaders are thought to play an essential part in influencing a team's climate. Therefore, in order to develop and sustain inclusive climates, the Army has to develop inclusive leaders. Scholars have taken a few different approaches to conceptualize inclusive leadership. While there are common themes among these perspectives, they also have their own nuances. The first perspective defines inclusive leadership as leader actions that focus on the practice of inviting and appreciating input of all members in decision-making processes (e.g., Carmeli, Reiter-Palmon, & Ziv, 2010; Hannum, McFeeters, & Booysen, 2010; Mor Barak, 2011; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). According to this paradigm, leaders are inclusive to the extent to which they act in a way that creates a safe environment for all members to voice their perspectives and contribute to the group. In this vein, inclusive leaders try to ensure the inclusion of all voices and ask "whose perspective might we be missing?" (see Gallegos, 2014).

Other scholars have conceptualized inclusive leadership in terms of the quality of relationships that leaders have with their followers (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). According to this view, the relationship that leaders have with their followers has important implications for the follower's status within the team and likely affects how included they feel. Because of this, leaders who develop quality relationships with all of their followers are seen as more inclusive than leaders who potentially create divisions in their team by developing high-quality relationships with some of their team members and low-quality relationships with others.

Table 1
Climate for Inclusion in the U.S. Army Definition and Supporting Dimensions

	Climate For Inclusion Definition
	A shared perception that all members of the team are valued and integrated into the team, and their capabilities are recognized and leveraged so that all are enabled to participate and contribute to the mission, to their full potential.

	Climate For Inclusion Dimensions
Fair Treatment	This dimension is characterized by unbiased and transparent organizational practices, including merit-based promotions, and equitable access to resources (e.g., professional development and training opportunities). Unit members have a shared perception that everyone must meet the same standard, and corrections and disciplinary actions for failing to meet that standard are distributed fairly, respectfully, and according to Army regulations. Soldiers know where they stand based on formal and informal counseling and are given opportunities to make improvements.
Openness to Differences	This dimension is characterized by a respect for the diversity of all unit members. Members recognize that other Soldiers come from different backgrounds and have different experiences and beliefs. Members take the time to learn about and understand the people they work with, in order to show respect for others who are different. As a result, members feel they work in a safe environment where they are able to engage in genuine interactions.
Integration into the Unit	This dimension is characterized by an integrated unit identity in which all members are incorporated into the unit, leading to positive interactions and processes. Members are accepted by- and connected to- others in the unit whom they can rely on for support. Individuals share a unit identity as well as retaining their individual and other group based identities.
Leveraging Unique Perspectives and Expertise	Members share the belief that there are multiple ways of achieving the same objective and see the importance of seeking and leveraging diverse perspectives for mission accomplishment. All members are encouraged to participate to their full potential, are recognized for their unique strengths, and are invited to contribute/participate when appropriate. Unit members know the value of working through disagreements even when it is uncomfortable, and believe by doing so, the unit can experience positive mission outcomes and broadened perspectives.
Shared Understanding in Communications	This dimension is characterized by a shared expectation of what needs to be communicated, to whom, when, and how (e.g., in a respectful manner) in order to promote understanding throughout the unit. Members recognize that individuals communicate in distinct ways, thus different communication styles are used in order to minimize misunderstandings. Members have access to and can share information through open, two-way communication that occurs both vertically (e.g., between immediate leaders and subordinates) and horizontally (e.g., peer to peer).

The last major line of thinking on inclusive leadership is grounded in optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991; Randel et al., 2017). According to this theory, people have a need to feel like they both belong with a social group, and can be themselves and unique. Thus, from this perspective, inclusive leaders act in a way that makes their followers identify with the team and feel like they belong, while at the same time the followers feel valued for who they are and recognized for their unique strengths (Randel et al., 2017).

While general conceptualizations exist, emerging inclusion research has yet to fully understand the leader actions that are essential to fostering inclusive climates (Randel et al., 2017). Research examining a leader's role in creating and maintaining inclusive climates has tended to take a broad strokes approach to describing inclusive leader actions; and these actions often overlap with actions that are, more generally, characteristic of good leaders (see Booysen, 2014; Nishii & Rich, 2014; Wasserman et al., 2008). For instance, Wasserman and colleagues (2008) suggest leaders must create the circumstances for which an open dialogue can explore differences, while others suggest that leaders should "be open to alternative ideas about how to go about the organization's work" or "provide multiple channels for upward communication" (see Nishii & Rich, 2014, p. 336). In addition, research that has investigated more specific

4

inclusive leader actions has often been too restrictive, focusing only on the aspects of inclusive leadership related to a leader being open and accessible (see Carmeli et al., 2010), rather than a comprehensive assessment that includes other important facets like integration of members, sharing power in decision-making, and fairness.

Therefore, the view of inclusive leadership that we adopt is similar to what Randel and colleagues (2017) have proposed. While the overarching behaviors we propose are slightly different, we also believe that inclusive leadership is a leadership style where leaders operate in a somewhat paradoxical manner by making their followers feel like they are part of the team and belong in their group while at the same time making them feel valued for their individual uniqueness (Randel et al., 2017). This view incorporates past research by acknowledging that inclusive leaders appreciate and invite follower input and develop good relationships with their followers, while leaving room for other leadership actions that foster perceptions of inclusion as well. The work on inclusive climates in the Army performed by Brown et al. (2018) provides some general insight into how Army leaders might act in order to make their followers feel like they belong and are valued for who they are. For example, inclusive leaders might make their followers feel like they belong by treating them fairly, helping them integrate into the unit, and developing a shared understanding through open, two-way communication. Likewise, inclusive leaders might indicate that they value their followers' uniqueness by being open to differences and leveraging their team members' unique perspectives. Therefore, while these five dimensions describe an inclusive climate (Brown et al., 2018), we propose that they can also provide a foundation for how leaders act inclusively in the Army.

While the inclusive leadership framework describes how Army leaders act inclusively at a broad level, far less is known about the specific actions that inclusive leaders take in military contexts. The formal hierarchical structure of military organizations, and the extreme contexts in which units operate, may produce unique challenges for implementing inclusion. The guidance the Army has given Soldiers in doctrine regarding leader inclusivity has also been broad in scope; leaders are, for example, advised to support diversity and inclusiveness, integrate all team members into the unit, and to use the skills and capabilities of team members without providing preferential treatment (U.S. Department of the Army, 2015). Due to this knowledge gap, there is a need to understand what specific actions leaders take to act inclusively.

The Current Research

In order to develop leaders who can leverage the diverse capabilities within their unit, identification and measurement of inclusive leader actions is needed. Past research has been either overly general or too limited in scope, and virtually non-existent within military contexts. Thus, the current research aims to address the aforementioned gap by identifying a comprehensive set of inclusive leader actions that enable Army leaders to recognize the unique

diversity in their units and fully realize unit member capabilities.[2] In an effort to identify a comprehensive inventory of inclusive leader actions, the current research draws from several sources including prior research conducted by the Army Research Institute for Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI), Army doctrine, academic research, and critical incidents generated by Army Soldiers. This research will lead to the development of a validated measure of inclusive leader actions that can be used to provide evaluative feedback to Army leaders on their progress towards projecting inclusive leadership. Ultimately, understanding how leaders in military contexts foster inclusion with their subordinates is critical to leadership effectiveness and organizational success, and is fundamental to promoting inclusive climates characterized by dignity and respect.

Method

Initial Generation of Items

Resource pool for item generation. The objective of this research was to identify a comprehensive and representative list of leader actions that are associated with inclusive leadership. Each item in the Inclusive Leadership Survey (ILS) describes an action by an Army leader that fosters Soldiers' perceptions of inclusion. Item development was anchored by Brown et al.'s (2018) inclusive leadership framework, which includes five dimensions: fair treatment (FT), being open to differences (OD), integration into the unit (IU), leveraging unique perspectives and expertise (LP), and developing shared understanding in communications (SU); for description of dimensions, see Table 1. Moreover, four sources were utilized to identify the initial leader actions: (a) the U.S. Army's Leadership Doctrine, FM 6-22; (b) leader actions identified by a literature review; (c) leader actions generated from focus group data; and (d) leader actions identified by Soldiers during survey data collection. We discuss the item development from each of these different sources in turn.

U.S. Army FM 6-22 (Army Leadership). The U.S. Army's FM 6-22 (U.S. Department of the Army, 2015) is a doctrinal manual focusing on Army leadership and the competencies that the Army aims to develop in their leaders. A total of 543 leader attributes across ten competencies (see FM 6-22 Chapter 7) were reviewed (e.g., lead others, build trust) along with their associated strength/need indicators (e.g., "is open to others' ideas and sees how new ideas can improve the unit's performance"). Strength indicators refers to statements that describe successful performance of a given attribute or competency, while need indicators describe what performance may look like when an attribute or competency is in need of development (U.S. Department of the Army, 2015). Item review was conducted by two researchers simultaneously to determine, through discussion, if the item fit one of the five inclusive leadership dimensions. From these indicators of leadership, a total of 85 items were identified by two researchers to be indicative of one of the five dimensions. Examples of identified items include: "explains

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[2] We use the term "actions" (vs. "behaviors") in the current research for three primary reasons. First, the term action is a more all-encompassing term in which behaviors are nested within (e.g., an act is something one does and a behavior is the manner in which someone acts). Second, related to the first point, our measure of leader inclusiveness is comprehensive, covering a range of leadership doings like broad actions (e.g., setting forth standard operating procedures [SOPs] or enacting policies) to more specific behaviors (e.g., checking in with Soldiers to see if information is tracked and understood). Lastly, Army doctrine on leadership uses the term "actions" consistently when describing what leaders should do (see U.S. Department of the Army, 2012; 2015).

standards and their significance" (FT), "identifies areas of commonality and builds upon shared experiences" (OD), "rapidly and effectively integrates new members" (IU), "uses knowledgeable sources and subject matter experts" (LP), and "translates task goals and objectives into a sequenced action plan" (SU).

Leader actions identified from literature review. Researchers also conducted a review of 30 articles from the inclusion literature. Across these articles, 197 leader actions were mentioned. From these leader actions, a total of 37 actions were identified by two researchers to be indicative of one of the five inclusive leadership dimensions. Examples of identified items include: "treats employees fairly (distributes resources fairly)" (FT), "monitor and correct employee biases" (OD), "focus on we and all rather than me, us, and them" (IU), "genuinely elicit viewpoints from followers" (LP), and "openly share information and seek transparency" (SU).

Leader actions generated from focus group data. A list of 81 leader actions were generated from focus groups. These actions were generated from data collected from 52 focus groups across four Army posts (160 active duty Soldiers from various ranks and MOSs; 95 Enlisted Soldiers, 5 WOs, 60 Officers; 83 Force Sustainment Division, 51 Operations Division, 15 Operations Support Division, and 11 from unidentified units). Participants were asked questions geared at understanding what inclusive leadership looks like in the Army (e.g., "What behaviors should be modeled to build a climate of dignity, respect, and inclusion?", "What behaviors have made you an inclusive leader?"). From this data, a total of 49 items were identified by researchers to be indicative of one of the five dimensions. Examples of identified items include: "hold everybody to the same standard" (FT), "be respectful to Soldiers' time" (OD), "be inclusive of Soldiers' families" (IU), "empower Soldiers to make decisions" (LP), and "communicate a clear purpose" (SU).

Informal leader actions identified from survey data. A list of 1,362 informal leader actions collected as part of a separate effort to develop and validate a measure of inclusive climates were reviewed. These responses were collected through a prior data collection (310 active duty Soldiers from various ranks and MOSs; 149 Enlisted Soldiers, 161 Officers; 117 combat arms, 50 combat support, and 143 combat service support; Brown et al., 2018) using open-ended responses to questions for each inclusive leadership dimension (e.g., "Describe ways a leader and/or unit member can informally reinforce or address the concept of value in diversity in their unit"). From these informal leader actions, a total of 146 actions were identified by two researchers to be indicative of one of the five inclusive leadership dimensions. Examples of identified items include: "fair and strict punishment across all ranks for infractions" (FT), "don't put people down or use personal attacks" (OD), "do physical training with all platoons" (IU), "ask all, don't focus on one type or group when seeking input" (LP), and "explain how the decision benefits the Soldier or the group" (SU).

Initial item pool. The actions listed above resulted in 317 items that were identified as representing inclusive leader actions. After a final check of face validity by the two researchers an additional four items were removed leaving an initial pool of 313 items.

Initial Item Pool Review and Refinement

      Item pool specificity. The overarching goal of item development was to identify items that represented inclusive leader actions in the Army. However, this goal proved to be difficult to achieve. For many of the referenced datasets, Soldiers were asked to identify behaviors associated with a style of leadership that may not be present in their unit or that they may not understand. Moreover, participants tended to generate general positive actions that are frequently discussed as part of leader education/training/doctrine, while having greater difficulty focusing solely on behaviors necessary for inclusion. Therefore, attention was given to excluding actions that were too vague (e.g., treat Soldiers fairly) and could be interpreted to be predictive of a number of important constructs, such as cohesion or resilience. Because of concerns that the initial pool of 313 items was still too general and could potentially describe many types of positive climates, the items were further evaluated in two phases to ensure the appropriate level of specificity.

      Identifying goal and strategy. One of the steps taken to increase the specificity of the items was to ensure (a) that the goal of the action could be identified (i.e., researchers asked themselves 'what' the purpose of the action was, relevant to inclusion – for example, 'building cohesion and trust') and (b) that an associated strategy to facilitate inclusion was represented (i.e., researchers made sure it was clear 'how' the leader would engage in the action – for example, 'organizing unit activities that require teamwork'). During later stages of item development and refinement, an effort was made to retain the goals and strategies that were identified at this earlier stage.

      Cross-referencing initial item pool with Soldier experiences of leader actions. Another step was to compare the item pool with critical incidents provided by Soldiers. This was done to ensure that the items comprehensively covered the proposed dimensions of inclusive leadership and to increase the specificity of items. To achieve these objectives, 146 critical incidents were collected from 127 Soldiers at two Army installations. The critical incident methodology (Berry, 2003; Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, & Magilo, 2005; Flanagan, 1954) is often utilized to capture the behavioral processes that individuals undergo to respond to work-related situations. In order to identify actions more closely tied to inclusive leadership, Soldiers who provided critical incidents were asked to think of experiences with leaders (or acting as leaders themselves) that either encouraged or discouraged an inclusive climate. Soldiers were then asked to provide critical incidents for each of the five dimensions of inclusive leadership (FT, OD, IU, LP, SU). To ensure Soldiers understood the five dimensions and what an inclusive climate is, definitions of both an inclusive climate and the five dimensions were provided to participants. When describing the incidents, Soldiers were asked to discuss the situation that occurred, actions taken by the leader, and the outcome of the situation. Here is an example of a critical incident that one Soldier gave for the leveraging unique perspectives dimension:

      Situation: My new platoon wanted to learn more about medical terminology, so my platoon SGT had me teach a class on common injuries that an infantryman would see. **Action**: I taught my infantry platoon about what I would do in a certain situation where there was serious trauma to a patient and described how they could help. **Outcome**: My

platoon had a better understanding of my job and how important they could be to the medic.

After collecting the incidents, two steps were taken in the crosswalk of the critical incidents with the item pool. While participants had provided incidents associated with each of the dimensions, in some cases it was clear that the examples did not align with the definition provided to participants. Thus, in Step 1, two researchers independently indicated which dimension they believed the incident would fall under (e.g., FT = 1, OD = 2, IU = 3, LP = 4, SU = 5, Not Inclusion = 0). Initial agreement for rater decisions was 72.6%; in cases of disagreement, researchers conversed and came to a mutually agreed upon decision for characterizing each critical incident. In Step 2, critical incidents that were deemed to fit a given dimension of inclusive leadership were then cross-referenced with the pool of items from the relevant dimension; leader actions from the item pool that fit the characterization of each critical incident were noted as exemplars. If no items in the pool of leader action items would serve as an exemplar to a given critical incident, a new item was generated to add to the pool of items, resulting in eight additional items being added to the pool. This brought the total number of items to 321. As all of the original items were represented in sufficient specificity within the critical incident data, the initial item pool was deemed to be a good representation of inclusive leadership.

Removing items for redundancy. During the two phases described above, it became clear that there was a substantial amount of overlap among the items. In an effort to minimize this redundancy, the items were examined in these stages for redundancy both within and across the dimensions of inclusive leadership. When items were found to be redundant, the clearest and most concise item was retained and all others were discarded. A total of 222 items were found to be redundant, bringing the total numbers of items down to 99.

Refinement of items. At this stage, the remaining items were edited so that they were (a) clear to readers, (b) not double-barreled, (c) using an appropriate target (e.g., unit members instead of Soldiers), and (d) meeting grammar/punctuation standards.

External Researcher Review and Content Validation

External Review. At this stage of item development, three researchers who had not been heavily involved in the preceding steps reviewed the items. The goals of this stage were to make the items more concise and readable while further reducing redundancy across the items. With these criteria in mind, external researchers independently reviewed the items and suggested changes. Then, the researchers met and discussed their suggestions. Only proposed revisions and deletions that came to a consensus in the collective discussion were accepted.

Content Validation Exercise. The next phase of item development asked the same three researchers who participated in the external review to complete a content validation exercise. In this exercise, each researcher was presented with a randomized list of items and with definitions for the five proposed dimensions of inclusive leadership. After this, researchers were asked to independently pick which dimension they thought each item best represented. They were also given an option to select if they thought the item overlapped with several factors or if they

thought it did not belong to any of the dimensions. After the exercise, the researchers met to discuss the results. Specifically, the discussion focused on the items that researchers disagreed about and the items that researchers thought overlapped or did not belong. If the researchers could not come to a consensus on a single best dimension for an item, then that item was discarded. After this exercise and the preceding review, 31 items were discarded, which left 68 items in the final pool (see Appendix).

Discussion

Leaders play an essential role in the Army's strategy to build positive climates that can capitalize on the benefits of diversity. Put simply, if the Army wants inclusive climates, then the Army needs inclusive leaders who are able to build and sustain those climates. Given this, the research described here focused on identification of inclusive leadership actions and development of the Inclusive Leadership Survey. The items generated as part of this effort take into consideration the academic literature, military doctrine, and include service members' perspectives from over 10 installations.

Several challenges were present that made this task somewhat difficult in nature. First, not much is known about inclusive leader actions in organizations generally, or in military organizations specifically. Second, contextual and structural factors associated with the Army organization have implications for inclusive leadership. In particular, the hierarchical structure of the military, in conjunction with the extreme contexts encountered by military units may impact how an Army leader solicits input, provides opportunities for upward communication, and leverages the full participation of unit members. Given this, caution was needed when addressing the question 'what does inclusive leadership look like in a military context?'

Efforts to answer this question were also impacted by the ongoing need to understand the relationship between inclusive leader actions and "good leader behavior." Inclusive leader actions likely represent a subset of "good leadership" and there is clear overlap between inclusive leadership and actions necessary to build cohesion, trust, resilience, teamwork, etc. Thus, an overarching challenge for this project was to ascertain how leader actions for inclusion might differ from "good leadership" within a military context, while being mindful that the data gathered from Soldiers—and used to generate items for the survey—may have been overly representative of good leadership. These concerns were addressed by the repeated examination of the items using a variety of strategies and datasets. The result of this work can be found in the Appendix, and includes 68 items that represent the actions Army leaders can take to promote perceptions of inclusion within their units. Understanding the actions that leaders need to take is the first step in developing inclusive climates. By identifying the leader actions associated with inclusive leadership, the Army is in a better position to assess and develop leaders who are equipped to build and maintain inclusive climates.

Future Survey Development Work

While this research provides a good foundation, there are several steps that still need to be taken to in order to develop a reliable and valid measure of inclusive leadership. Specifically, the next phase of research will take the items that have been presented here and distribute them

to Soldiers to have them evaluate the inclusive leadership of their immediate leaders. The goals of this next step in the research process will be to reduce the number of items, test the underlying structure of the survey that was presented here, examine the reliability of the survey, and examine the relationship between inclusive leadership and other measures in order to provide evidence for the validity of the scale.

Furthermore, future research will also take a broader view of leadership in general. Leadership is an influence process that, by definition, involves a person or a group that is trying to influence another person or group in order to accomplish a goal (U.S. Department of the Army, 2012). While the inclusive leadership survey asks Soldiers to evaluate the actions of their leaders, there are many factors outside of actions of a single leader that can affect the leadership process (for a review of some of these factors, see Barling, Christie, & Hoption, 2011). One of these factors is the internal thoughts and beliefs of followers (Bligh, 2011). Due to this, the next phase of the research will incorporate this perspective by gathering information from followers about their beliefs. Specifically, followers will be asked to indicate the extent to which they value the inclusive leadership actions that they are evaluating their leaders on. We propose that the effectiveness of different inclusive leadership actions will vary depending on how much followers actually value those actions. This proposition has roots in the field of leader prototypicality which suggests that when leaders are more aligned with the group's values and norms, then they are more likely to receive support from their group and be perceived as more effective (Barreto & Hogg, 2017; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003).

Conclusion

In summary, this research identified specific actions inclusive leaders take to promote inclusion within their units. Specifically, 68 actions were identified as inclusive leadership actions. These actions provide a solid understanding of what inclusive leadership is and looks like within a military context. Future efforts within this program of research will build on this foundation to develop a valid measure of inclusive leadership. It is our hope that this measure will allow the Army to measure inclusive leadership across the force providing data to guide training and leader development efforts.

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Appendix

Items by Inclusive Leadership Dimensions

Fair Treatment

Enforces standards equally across all unit members.

Ensures performance evaluations are based on merit.

Avoids showing favoritism when assigning tasks.

Assigns meaningful tasks regardless of rank.

Addresses all unit members in the same way to avoid perceptions of preferential treatment.

Nominates unit members for awards based on merit.

Ensures that unit members have sufficient access to resources.

Ensures unit members are disciplined in the same manner.

Provides unbiased feedback on unit member performance.

Addresses sensitive concerns with the unit in a respectful manner.

Openness to Differences

Identifies common ground that can help unite unit members.

Urges unit members to speak up when their views differ.

Promotes understanding of similarities and differences among unit members.

Urges unit members to be flexible when interacting with peers.

Urges unit members to talk to other unit members about prior life experiences.

Provides chances for unit members to learn about other cultures.

Urges unit members to share different views when discussing hard topics.

Publically appreciates unit members' unique views.

Allows less popular viewpoints to be respectfully expressed.

Respectfully corrects unit member biases.

Highlights the value of unit members' past experiences.

Learns about unit members' distinct backgrounds.

Gets to know unit members before forming an opinion of them.

Integration into the Unit

Ensures unit members feel a part of the unit.

Gives new unit members the information needed to integrate into the unit.

Introduces new unit members to senior leaders.

Pairs new unit members with experienced Soldiers when performing tasks.

Gives unit members opportunities to talk about their background with the unit.

Shows new unit members how things work.

Ensures that sponsors and new unit members have things in common.

Gives unit members opportunities to contribute once they arrive at the unit.

Organizes unit activities that build trust among unit members.

Promotes unit pride (for example, by talking about unit accomplishments).

Focuses on achieving unit goals through teamwork.

Participates in taskings with unit members ("gets hands dirty").

Strives to be available to unit members regardless of their rank.

Assigns tasks that require teamwork.

Organizes events so that all unit members can participate.

Welcomes families/significant others at unit events.

Supports unit members in being themselves with the group.

Connects "left out" unit members with the group.

Tries to understand why unit members are being excluded.

Leveraging Unique Perspectives and Expertise

Seeks out unit members ideas on the best courses of action.

Admits limits of their own knowledge and skill.

Identifies unit members who have the right skills to address the problem at hand.

Ensures all sides of a problem have been heard.

Urges unit members to express different views.

Assigns tasks that leverage unit members' unique skill sets.

Provides methods (for example, suggestion boxes) for unit members to give honest feedback.

Talks about the benefits of using Soldiers' unique skills for mission accomplishment.

Publically recognizes how unit members contribute to the mission.

Finds a compromise between differing viewpoints where there is no "right" answer.

Urges unit members to build on other unit members' views during unit discussions.

Acknowledges unit member ideas even if they are not included in the final decision.

Shows respect for unit members personal opinions.

Urges unit members to think about how others might view the problem.

Shared Understanding in Communication

Checks to see if unit members are tracking information.

Uses similar methods to communicate with all unit members.

Models respectful communication styles with unit members.

Sets clear rules for respectful communication.

Communicates information clearly to unit members.

Adjusts communication style depending on who they are talking to.

Promotes information sharing across the unit.

Gives unit members chances for upward communication.

Encourages unit members to ask questions.

Ensures critical information reaches the entire unit.

Talks about why decisions were made.

Is available to unit members to clarify tasks.